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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USOSCE 000257

SIPDIS

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NSC FOR SHERWOOD-RANDALL, HAYDEN, MCFAUL, HOVENIER,  
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OSD FOR ISA (WALLENDER, KEHL)  
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SUBJECT: FSC OF NOVEMBER 11: BOAT TO ATHENS BETWEEN SCYLLA  
AND CHARYBDIS

Classified By: Chief Arms Control Delegate Hugh Neighbour; Reasons 1.4(  
b)(d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The November 11 FSC's Working Group B (WGB) has displaced the Plenary for length of time and most attention in the run up to the OSCE Athens Ministerial. The Draft Ministerial Council Decision on Small Arms and Light Weapons will move forward, but the politically-charged paper "Issues Relevant to the FSC" continued to flounder on several points, among them were characterizations of the Security Dialogue discussion on the Russia-Georgia conflict and Russia's attempt to insert Corfu prerogatives into the FSC format. The UK FSC Chair (Gare) called an informal FSC on November 12 to attempt clearing away some of the chaff within the Issues draft paper. At that meeting, the U.S. proposed language to seek to displace Russia's unhelpful draft for a stand-alone decision mandating a review of Vienna Document ¶1999. Meanwhile, the UK hopes to resurrect their original draft with minor ) but still problematic ) changes that will still need heavy lifting before the Issues paper is ready to ship off to Athens. A Ukraine-proposed draft Ministerial Declaration on Non-Proliferation is being worked separately in a U.S.-Russia-Ukraine trilateral format and could be ready for formal presentation in WGB as a revised draft soon depending on Washington's and Moscow's flexibility. End Summary.

FSC Plenary is "any other business"

¶2. (SBU) There were no General Statements or Security Dialogue issues at the 594th FSC discussion held on November ¶11. France announced (under AOB) a Euros 15,000 contribution to the Belarus SALW project. Slovenia described its participation with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Azerbaijan and Georgia in a Middle Management Course on revering the threats of landmines and Unexploded Ordinance (UXO).

WGB: how do you describe conflict?

¶3. (SBU) The discussion in Working Group B bogged down on the differences between Russian and Georgian approaches to the references regarding discussion in the FSC Security Dialogue

to address conflict situations and security problems (Op 1, Tick 2 of MC.DD/8/09/Rev.2). Georgia (Giorgadze) reported his strict instructions from Tbilisi to use the agreed language contained in the 2008 Issues Relevant to the FSC document that specified the FSC did discuss "the armed conflict of August 2008." Russia (Ulyanov) argued for retaining the original FSC Chair draft language that did not specify the August 2008 conflict, but noted that if Georgia insists on the specificity then Russia would need to assert the moral distinction between aggressor (Georgia) and those that ended the aggression (Russia).

¶4. (C) Several delegations (Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, Armenia, Georgia, Austria, Greece, Sweden, Romania, Canada, Ireland) attempted to move forward ) more or less ) with a "more neutral tone" varying between the UK's original language for this paragraph or the 2008 language but were stymied by continued lengthy interventions by Russia and Georgia. Eventually the UK chair suggested further bilateral discussions would be required before returning to this particular operational paragraph. (Comment: The exchange between Russia and Georgia became personal when Ulyanov accused Georgian diplomats of being notorious for operating "on their own." One point was clear that no one wanted inclusion of the Russian "moral distinction." Many delegates attempted to further diffuse the acerbic exchange by drawing attention to suggestions for the second operational paragraph. Another danger flared but passed to the relief of all when Armenia and Azerbaijan engaged on a distantly related issue of defining the "conflict cycle," which will be continued informally! End comment.)

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¶5. (SBU) Russia defended its changes to operational paragraph 2, which directs the FSC over the next year. Ulyanov said the only real security dialogue was between Russia and Georgia, and that the FSC was not able to get to work because some delegations refuse to engage in a real discussion about conflict situations. Ulyanov warned if the FSC were to conduct business as usual then this would be a backwards step. The U.S. (Neighbour) offered up language on intensifying the Security Dialogue that would "help Russia out by using its language."

Russia's Proposal for VD99 Review

¶6. (SBU) Belarus introduced the Russia-Belarus draft Ministerial Decision to review VD99 (FSC.DEL/203/09). The U.S. (Neighbour) challenged the need for a separate decision, noting the original UK draft was the optimal formulation. Romania, The Netherlands, Latvia, Canada, Norway all spoke out against a separate Ministerial Decision on VD99, although some indicated their support for an "assessment" of VD99. Denmark, Sweden, Cyprus, France, Armenia, and Spain, noted their support for a VD99 review or assessment but were flexible on how this moved forward towards consensus. Austria said the time had come for improvements after ten years, an assessment (or evaluation) should be the first step followed by a review, and a decision was needed but was flexible on how. Italy and Germany supported a separate decision for a review without responding to the issue of the particular form this would take. Russia expressed "gratitude that virtually all comments have said it was time for an update to VD99." Ulyanov also noted there was "broad support for targeted improvements," adding Russia was taking a carefully balanced, considered, and not hasty "phased approach for joint considerations." While acknowledging some countries were against a separate decision, Russia believed it was necessary to "clearly spell out or nothing will be accomplished."

¶7. (C) With regards to its draft decision for a Ministerial Declaration on Non-Proliferation (FSC.DEL/199/09), Ukraine announced that consultations continued and it hoped to circulate a revised draft before the next WGB. (Note: an

informal trilateral discussion among Russia, U.S. and Ukraine was held on November 13 to tighten the text and agree common positions on the range of issues included in the Ukrainian draft declaration. Much progress was made at reconciling positions, including review of additional changes put forward by Switzerland, Turkey and France. Details are reported separately. End note.)

¶18. (SBU) WGB agreed to move the Draft Ministerial Decision on SALW and SCA (MC.DD/4/09/Rev.2) to plenary. WGB also did a cursory review of the FSC Chair's Draft Letter to the Chairman-in-Office (MC.GAL/4/09), and the input for the Athens Ministerial Council Declaration (MC.GAL/5/09). Germany (Genrich) requested examples of the "new areas of work" noted in the Chair's letter to Ministers, "to make the point clearer." (Comment and RFG: Both texts look generally acceptable. A small change (proposed by Russia) was made to the FSC's input specifying, "The progress achieved should (vice "can") be built on by the FSC in 2010." Unless otherwise instructed, Del will join consensus on these two documents to move to plenary. End comment/RFG.)

WGA ) Digital Cameras still pending; Ukraine VD99  
Food-for-Thought on menu

¶19. (SBU) In Working Group "A," the UK Chair announced an imminent revision to the draft decision on the Agenda and Modalities of the AIAM (FSC.DD/9/09). Note: the revision is the result of Russia inserting a curiously worded reference to VD99 and a "broader assessment of implementation of agreed

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CSBMs and relevant OSCE instruments." End note.

¶10. (C) Azerbaijan (Jafarova) said it was uninstructed on the proposal for a draft decision to extend the use of digital cameras in VD99 verification visits (FSC.DEL/124/09/Rev.1). On the margins of the FSC, Jafarova explained to the U.S. (Ellis) that its Joint Staff was concerned with the technical capabilities of digital cameras, and may have difficulty reaching a decision. (Comment and Request for Guidance: There is much interest in the USG position on this issue. We note the Turkish Food-for-Thought has been lingering in its revised form since October 9 (originally aired in May 2009). Unless otherwise instructed, USDEL intends to request that this important issue be revisited in the first quarter of ¶2010. End comment/RFG.)

¶11. (SBU) The Chair (Gare) and Russia agreed to discuss separately whether to retain on the agenda for WGA the Russian Food-for-Thought paper on An Analysis of the Implementation of VD99 (FSC.AIAM/2/09 -- it subsequently has been pulled from the next agenda). Ukraine noted it had received some comments but requested additional ones on its Food-for-Thought paper on Interpretation of some Provisions of VD99 Chapter I, Annual Exchange of Military Information (FSC.DEL/196/09). (Comment: USOSCE/AC believes there is substantial CSBM value to an exchange of information on non-resident deployed forces worth exploring in the Ukraine draft. End comment.) The proposal for a draft decision on an update of FSC Decision 15/02 Expert Advice on SALW (FSC.DEL/193/09/Rev.2) was cleared by WGA for reissue as a decision document. The FSC Chair's several Progress Reports to the Ministerial Council on SALW (FSC.DEL/191/09/Rev.2), Stockpiles of Conventional Armaments (FSC.DEL/195/09/Rev.1), Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (FSC.DEL/192/09/Rev.1), and Efforts in the Field of Arms Control Agreements and CSBMs (FSC.DEL/200/09/Rev.1) were forwarded to the printers for distribution at the Athens Ministerial.

¶12. (SBU) The November 12 informal FSC called by the UK Chair made some progress on the Issues Relevant to the FSC draft in shrinking the text but the main contentious issues (noted above) remain. At that meeting, the U.S. (Neighbour) noted it preferred the original draft as prepared by the UK

Chair, but tabled some text taken from Russian proposals if it would help consensus. Afterwards, the UK (Gare) told the U.S. (Ellis) her plan was to reconstruct the inputs and exchanges from the informal discussion (minus Georgia-Russia) to circulate a revised draft "not that much different" than the original, unrevised UK draft from October 23, as noted and preferred by several delegations.

¶13. (SBU) The next meeting of the FSC plenary and Working Groups is scheduled for November 18.  
FULLER